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FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAKAR 000412

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF, AF/W AND DRL/AE  
PARIS FOR POL - D'ELIA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/22/2017  
TAGS: PHUM PREL OPDC OPRC SG  
SUBJECT: GADIO REACTS TO CONDEMNATION OF ELECTION VIOLENCE

REF: DAKAR 0410

Classified By: Ambassador Janice L. Jacobs for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Following the latest campaign violence on February 21 (reftel), I convened Embassy Dakar's Emergency Action Committee. The Committee agreed on a number of steps to minimize danger to the private and official American communities. We also issued a press release condemning political violence. The DCM delivered a copy to the Chief of Staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and I called Minister of Interior Ousmane NGom to express my concern about the absence of security forces last night. NGom lamely claimed that this violence was normal in most countries ) an assertion with which I disagreed ) and that the security forces could not be everywhere although the gendarmerie training facility and a gendarmerie station are within one mile of last evening's confrontation.

¶2. (C) Senior Minister for Foreign Affairs Cheikh Tidiane Gadio subsequently called me to say that President Wade is very unhappy with our statement. He claimed that we had criticized the Government, which we did not, and had sided with the opposition, which we also have not. He said friends would not use the word &condemn.8 Moreover, he suggested that the embassy statement precluded the issuance of a planned statement by the Government ) although NGom was certainly not aware of any such plan.

¶3. (C) Gadio said that the GOS would protest to the Department and take other appropriate action. The Ministry subsequently issued the statement in para. 4.

¶4. (U) An unofficial translation of the MFA statement follows:

BEGIN TEXT.

Republic of Senegal  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Press release

The Government of Senegal notes with surprise and astonishment the press release concerning recent election violence in Senegal issued on February 22 by the United States Embassy in Dakar.

Contrary to diplomatic custom, which consists of contacting and gathering facts from host government authorities, the U.S. Embassy first issued its press release and then sent a Counselor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ) along with other business ) inquire about the situation and the reaction of our government.

The Senegalese Government, people and guests in our country who share our daily lives, rejoice in the election campaign's generally positive unfolding in spite of a few rare and regrettable minor incidents.

As for the events of Wednesday, February 21, our Government, known for its condemnation of all violence and its attachment

to the rule of law and protection of rights, has launched an immediate inquiry to determine the causes of the incidents and to identify those responsible.

We invite the Embassy of the United States in Dakar to conduct its own inquiry on the sites and authorQf the provocations and to thus contribute to shedding light on who was truly responsible for the trouble that threatens to stain the peaceful electoral process that the Government seeks.

END TEXT.

¶5. (C) COMMENT: Although the Embassy may have ruffled some feathers, we successfully drew attention to worsening campaign violence. We hope that all parties will take note and appropriate action. END COMMENT.

JACOBS